

BARNET marched triumphantly into the first round proper of the F.A. Cup by playing Wycombe Wanderers out of sight in their fourth qualifying round replay under the Underhill lights on Tuesday evening. They didn't simply win, they won handsomely, and with such vigour and invention to guarantee the advance party from Walton and Hersham, their opponents next week, a few sleepless nights.

It was magnificent stuff. From the moment Meadows slipped Barnet ahead after a quarter-of-an-hour,

there was no disputing who were the better side, and two second-half goals underlined their superiority.

Rarely have Barnet been so sharp, so determined. They disputed every inch of territory as if their very lives depended on it; when they lost the ball, everyone worked to get it back and none harder than George, and their fast, flowing football, classic in concept and for once in execution, too, delighted Underhill's largest audience of the season.

Breathless

Wycombe were left, breathless and by the end a little bewildered, to ruefully reflect that they had missed the boat three days earlier. But Barnet manager Dexter Adams was the first to commend them on their contribution to two vastly entertaining and sporting encounters. In defeat, Wycombe can hold their heads up high.

The man who did most to undermine their confidence was, perhaps inevitably, Gerry Ward, a player of unique talent with the gift of turning a defence inside out with one carefully-planned pass. By the time he retired, injured, in the 75th minute, Ward had instigated the first goal, engineered the second and, by his own example, brought the best out of his side.

Around him, Powell rediscovered the form that attracted Football League clubs a year ago. Eason, quietly at first and later more perceptively, added his own brand of genius while all the time the back division dealt so capably with their opponents that McClelland only occasionally had to stir himself into action. Make no mistake about it, this was a superb, all-round display.

Wycombe were never allowed to find their feet. Delaney struggled manfully to hold their defence together, but they badly missed Lailey's midfield drive and Worley and Anthony on the wings found precious little time or space to dent, let alone demolish, the solid line of yellow shirts before them.

Curling

The amateurs survived in any degree of comfort for the opening 15 minutes. Barnet had attempted a few speculative long-range efforts, but when a cross from George was only half-cleared, they took their cue nicely. Maskell could not cling on to Ward's curling shot as it swerved away and MEADOWS was on hand to do the rest.

This early goal gave Barnet a hold on the game which they never relaxed. Pressuring Wycombe constantly and liberally using the wings to exploit the most vulnerable part of the visitors' defensive armour, they set up wave upon wave of attacks.

An outstretched boot prevented Thorne's low cross flashing through to Meadows by the far post. Delaney made a timely interception after Powell had rounded Maskell outside the penalty box, but a second goal would not come and we wondered at half-time if Wycombe might still get off the hook.

Barnet's reply was immediate and emphatic. The second half had no sooner been set in motion, than Ward spreadeagled the Wycombe defence with one glorious pass. Powell raced through unattended and lifted the ball out of Maskell's reach as the goalkeeper sprinted 25 yards off his line.

A magnificent goal, which demonstrated how to turn defence into lethal attack in one fleeting movement.

All along, Wycombe had been playing spiritedly up to Barnet's penalty area and then losing their way. Baker ran tirelessly and Busby searched in vain for even half a chance, but although Delaney loped up for corners and free kicks, a goal—now a dire necessity—seemed as far away as ever.

Disguised

Briefly, just briefly, Barnet faltered with Ward in some discomfort, but Wycombe's rapidly fading hopes were dashed once and for all in the 75th minute with a similar goal to number two. On this occasion Powell sent Eason streaking away through the middle. Eason skipped to the right of Maskell outside the box and scored with an ease that disguised the tremendous skill involved.

The mission as good as completed, Ward walked off to at last rest his injured leg. He had given to this match in 75 minutes what others would take several games to achieve.

Gregory substituted in a final quarter-of-an-hour which saw George's persistence almost produce a fourth goal and McClelland beat out a shot from Worley. It was Wycombe's only genuine scoring situation of the evening and Barnet's one real slip: this victory was as decisive as that.

BARNET: McClelland; Lye, Jenkins, Ward (substitute: Gregory), Embrey, King; Powell, George, Meadows, Eason, Thorne.

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, G. Gale, K. Stephenson, J. Delaney, D. Thomas; L. Worley, B. Baker, V. Busby, A. Horseman, G. Anthony.

ON THE MOVE

EX-FINCHLEY forward Stan Painter and former Barnet defender Stuart McLean have left Boreham Wood. Both figured in the Wood's promotion-winning side last season, but have been unable to command regular places this term.



Colin Powell—
scored a fine
second goal.

WALTON HAVE BEEN WARNED!

BARNET (1) 3
Meadows, Powell, Eason

Attendance:
2,956

WYCOMBE WANDERERS (0) 0

BY ROGER JONES

*Barnet
triumph
in
replay*